

**House File 179 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 179

BY DOLECHECK

(COMPANION TO LSB 2169SS BY  
DOTZLER)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to early school start date provisions and  
2 including effective and applicability dates.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 257.17, Code 2011, is amended to read as  
2 follows:

3 **257.17 Aid reduction for early school starts.**

4 State aid payments made pursuant to section 257.16 for a  
5 fiscal year shall be reduced by one one-hundred-eightieth for  
6 each day of that fiscal year for which the school district  
7 begins school before the earliest starting date specified in  
8 section 279.10, subsection 1. However, this section does not  
9 apply to a school district that has received approval from the  
10 ~~director of the department of education under section 279.10,~~  
11 ~~subsection 4,~~ for a pilot program for an innovative school year  
12 in accordance with section 279.10, subsection 3, or to commence  
13 classes for regularly established elementary and secondary  
14 schools in advance of the starting date established in due to  
15 an emergency in accordance with section 279.10, subsection 4.

16 Sec. 2. Section 279.10, subsections 1, 2, and 4, Code 2011,  
17 are amended to read as follows:

18 1. The school year shall begin on the first day of July  
19 and each regularly established elementary and secondary school  
20 shall begin no sooner than ~~a day during the calendar week~~  
21 ~~in which the first day of September falls~~ the fourth Monday  
22 in August but no later than the first Monday in December.  
23 ~~However, if the first day of September falls on a Sunday,~~  
24 ~~school may begin on a day during the calendar week which~~  
25 ~~immediately precedes the first day of September unless the~~  
26 ~~school district has received approval from the department of~~  
27 ~~education for a pilot program for an innovative school year~~  
28 ~~in accordance with subsection 3 or for an early start date~~  
29 ~~due to an emergency in accordance with subsection 4.~~ School  
30 shall continue for at least one hundred eighty days, except  
31 as provided in subsection 3, and may be maintained during the  
32 entire calendar year. However, if the board of directors of a  
33 district extends the school calendar because inclement weather  
34 caused the district to temporarily close school during the  
35 regular school calendar, the district may excuse a graduating

1 senior who has met district or school requirements for  
2 graduation from attendance during the extended school calendar.  
3 A school corporation may begin employment of personnel for  
4 in-service training and development purposes before the date to  
5 begin elementary and secondary school. The earliest starting  
6 date specified in this subsection shall not apply to a school  
7 district which maintains a year around three semester school  
8 year.

9 2. The board of directors shall hold a public hearing on  
10 any ~~proposal~~ request made pursuant to subsection 3 prior to  
11 submitting it to the department of education for approval.

12 4. ~~The director of the~~ department of education may grant  
13 a request made by a board of directors of a school district  
14 stating ~~its desire~~ that an emergency exists which requires the  
15 school district to commence classes for regularly established  
16 elementary and secondary schools prior to the earliest starting  
17 date specified in subsection 1. A The request shall ~~be based~~  
18 ~~upon the determination~~ set forth the reasons that a starting  
19 date ~~on or after~~ prior to the earliest starting date specified  
20 in subsection 1 ~~would have a significant negative educational~~  
21 ~~impact~~ is necessary and shall describe any actions the school  
22 district intends to take to ensure that student achievement is  
23 not adversely affected.

24 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect July 1, 2012.

25 Sec. 4. APPLICABILITY. This Act is applicable for school  
26 years beginning on or after July 1, 2012.

27 EXPLANATION

28 This bill changes the earliest school start date to the  
29 fourth Monday in August and modifies the authority of the  
30 department of education to grant a request made by a board of  
31 directors of a school district to commence classes prior to the  
32 earliest starting date allowed, which currently is no sooner  
33 than a day during the calendar week in which the first day of  
34 September falls or, if the first day of September falls on a  
35 Sunday, a day during the prior week. The bill exempts from

1 the earliest starting date requirement school districts that  
2 maintain a year around three semester school year.

3 The bill provides that the department may grant a request  
4 made by a school board stating that an emergency exists which  
5 requires the school district to commence classes for regularly  
6 established elementary and secondary schools prior to the  
7 fourth Monday in August. The request must set forth the  
8 reasons the early start date is necessary and must describe  
9 actions the school district intends to take to ensure that  
10 student achievement is not adversely affected.

11 The bill makes conforming changes to modify a provision  
12 that provides for a reduction in school foundation aid when  
13 school districts implement early school starts. The bill also  
14 includes a technical correction.

15 The bill takes effect July 1, 2012, for school years  
16 beginning on or after July 1, 2012.